

## THE PRESS D FENDED.

One Clergyman Handles Another's Criticism of the Newspaper.

Rev. Edwards Davis took for his subject last night, at Hamilton Hall, "The Theosophic Thought of the Christian Creed," but before he began on his sermon he made some caustic allusions to the recent speech of Rev. Arthur Crosby, delivered at San Jose, and in which Mr. Crosby roasted the modern press to a finish.

Mr. Davis said: "Before engaging in the discussion of the theme announced that I take occasion to use the organ of my speech to introduce as an incidental feature of the service a polemic voluntary. My improvisation is dedicated to my fellow laborer, the Rev. Arthur Crosby, whose recent remarks concerning the obnoxiousness of the press has not affected journalism half so much as it has reflected on religion. A prelude, I apprehend, in the words of Lowell, should be, 'First, guessed by faint auroral flashes.' Impersonally, then, there is a mote in the clerical eye. The fact that the newspaper is odoriferous with carbonic fumes of social rottenness is not nearly so appalling as that the gangrenous condition exists in our body politic. Since sins exist in our social system, is it better that they be ignored, and lulled with dulcet lullabies, be led into delusive realm? "When there is corruption cut it out. The clergy has succeeded in painting pictures of the heavenly sphere; the press is succeeding in publishing the facts in the case. Earth is a hell that purges man to make him fit for heaven. The most perfect purity comes not from innocence, but from forgiveness, and the knowledge of good not from an ignorance of sin. A saint may enjoy a sinner's suffering because of an insight into the inviolate obedience to infinite law.

"Through 400 years the stamp of the printing press has made its impression, good or bad, but always better than none. More definitely our brother maintains that he would rather have the sewer gas escape into his house than to admit some of our most popular daily papers. The malaria would not be so deadly. But why not bang the hole? To boycott the most popular dailies because of their realistic records of truth would with the same illogical indiscriminate exclude the writings of Whitman, Byron, Shakespeare, Tolstoi, Hawthorne and Hugo. There are passages of holy writ that need be read but once in a lifetime to learn their fearful lesson.

"The detailed account of the most atrocious crime, the pictures of the murders, the blood-stained weapons, the soiled clothes, the upraised hands, by their horror hold us away from the heinousness of sin. What has ridiculed the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight more than the caricatures of the staff artist's pen? Drunken rows in dance houses and brothels are not reported. The occurrence is too frequent to be counted news. The press is not prejudiced. It reports anything. The paper that gave four columns to Mr. Crosby's sermon gave but two to 'Hanged Both on One Gallows.'

"Tomorrow morning the sermons of the ministers of San Francisco and vicinity, preached tonight to 20,000 people, will be read by a quarter of a million souls."

This closed the preacher's remarks on this subject, and he picked up his theme and proceeded with his regular sermon.

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